

PLO trip not sign of better Saudi ties

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia said Sunday a visit by a top Palestinian official was not a sign of improving relations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). An official source told the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) that PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud (Abu Mazen) was visiting the kingdom at his own request. The source denied reports that the visit was a sign of restored relations. "We would like to indicate that Abu Mazen is visiting the kingdom at his own request to attend the celebrations marking the 28th anniversary of the start of the Palestinian revolution," SPA quoted the official as saying. "This visit has no purpose other than the one mentioned." Abu Mazen is the most senior PLO official to visit Saudi Arabia since the 1990-91 Kuwait crisis. All Gulf Arab states cut vital financial aid and political support to the PLO when it appeared to side with Iraq. Last month Abu Mazen held talks in Doha with the Emir of Qatar and also visited the Sultanate of Oman.

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Kabul forms parliament as rockets land

KABUL (R) — President Burhanuddin Rabbani's government announced an Afghan parliament Sunday as its opponents rained rockets on the capital and threatened to shut Kabul airport and a major airbase. Kabul Radio said the radical Hezb-e-Islami party fired 13 rockets into Kabul, damaging buildings and wounding at least six people. The radio blamed the Hezb for a series of rocket attacks which it said killed 27 people in Kabul in the past week. The Hezb denied last week that it was bombing the city. Presidential spokesman Abdul Aziz Morad told reporters that 205 members of parliament had been chosen from more than 1,000 members of a controversial Hal-o-Aqad assembly which elected Mr. Rabbani on Dec. 30 as president for the next two years. He said a few deputies might be added before the parliament convened on Jan. 25, with the major immediate task of approving an interim constitution for the country. The Hezb, led by hardline Mujahideen leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, said it would shoot down planes using Kabul's airport and Bagram airbase north of Kabul unless Hezb members arrested by pro-government forces were released by Monday evening.

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Evictee's baby born in West Bank

HEBRON, Occupied West Bank (R) — The wife of Palestinian expellee Samir Al Oadi gave birth to a girl Sunday and named her Marj Al Zohour after the piece of South Lebanon where he and 414 other evictees have been trapped for the past 24 days. Relatives said the 25-year-old mother and child, in Surif village near Hebron, were doing fine. The evictees have been living in a makeshift tent camp between Israeli and Lebanese army lines at Marj Al Zohour (the meadow of flowers).

Algerians asked to hand in hunting guns

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria's Interior Ministry has asked people with hunting guns to hand them in to the police for safe-keeping, apparently to keep them out of the hands of Muslim fundamentalist guerrillas fighting the security forces. The invitation applied to residents of the capital Algiers and six nearby regions. All are under an indefinite night curfew imposed on Dec. 5 as part of the authorities' campaign against the guerrillas. The guerrillas have killed more than 210 members of the security forces in the year since the authorities prevented the Islamic movement from winning elections.

Pakistan seeks to avert U.S. threat

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said Sunday that he wanted to improve ties with the United States, which says it may add Pakistan to its list of countries sponsoring terrorism. Speaking to reporters about the U.S. warning, Mr. Sharif said: "We want to make our relations with America better and better and there are no two opinions about it." The U.S. State Department told Islamabad Thursday that the incoming Clinton administration would review reports that Pakistan supported Kashmiri and Sikh militants "who commit terrorist acts in India." Mr. Sharif said: "Pakistan extends only moral, diplomatic and political support to the people of Kashmir and to give any other impression is wrong and unjustified."

El Al blames Boeing for Amsterdam crash

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's El Al airline said Sunday Boeing Co. was solely to blame for the crash of an El Al Boeing 747 cargo jet in Amsterdam that killed at least 43 people. "We committed no fault," El Al said in a statement. Boeing should be determined as being the completely responsible entity for this crash and must be compelled to take actual steps to prevent similar crashes in the future," said a report by El Al's investigating committee. On Oct. 4 an El Al Boeing 747 cargo jet lost two engines and ploughed into apartment buildings near Amsterdam's Schiphol airport. At least 43 people were killed, including the crew, one passenger, and a number of people on the ground.

Vassiliou to meet Ghali on peace plan

NICOSIA (R) — President George Vassiliou of Cyprus will meet U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali this week to discuss plans to reunite the divided island, an official statement said Sunday. The statement said that Mr. Vassiliou and Mr. Ghali would meet in Paris Thursday to discuss confidence-building measures included in a U.N.-sponsored proposal for Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to be reunited in a federation ending 18 years of separation.

Iraqis protest killing of Australian

AMMAN (R) — Thousands of Kurds demonstrated in northern Iraq demanding that local officials find and punish the killer of an Australian aid worker shot dead this week. Care Australia said Sunday, Care Australia's Middle East director Robert Yallop said the body of Stuart Cameron, 45, and his wounded colleague, Joe Martinico, were taken from the Kurdish town of Sulaimaniyah past an honour guard of local officials and militia and airlifted to Turkey Saturday.

Rabin maintains defiance of U.N. demand; Hariri bans airlift of evictees

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin Sunday reiterated his rejection of a U.N. demand that he allow home hundreds of Palestinians that Israel expelled to Lebanon.

Mr. Rabin emerged from an extended meeting of more than two hours with Chaima Gharekhan, envoy of U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, to say he would not allow the return of the 415 alleged Islamic activists Israel forced into Lebanon on Dec. 17.

"I want to say simply that we stand by the decision of the government," Mr. Rabin told reporters outside his office. Mr. Gharekhan said he was returning to New York to report on the meeting with Mr. Rabin and said any future action against Israel would be up to Security Council.

It was the second unsuccessful mission to Israel by a U.N. envoy seeking to implement the Security Council resolution demanding the immediate return of the evictees.

Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri Sunday banned further U.N. airlifts of the Palestinian evictees from the snow-bound

tent camp in southeast Lebanon.

Mr. Hariri said in an interview he was upset that Red Cross delegates, who visited the camp by helicopter Saturday, had taken two Palestinians out with them.

One, 16-year-old Bassem Syouri, was among 10 Palestinians Israel said it expelled "in error." The other, a 32-year-old man, was suffering from a kidney malfunction.

Mr. Hariri's stance could frustrate efforts by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to take out an additional nine Palestinians whom Israel says were mistakenly expelled.

"I approved Saturday's one-time mission of the Red Cross upon its assertions that the mission will be of a purely fact-finding nature," Mr. Hariri said. "But the Red Cross went beyond the mandate, and we are not going to allow another helicopter foray."

He insisted that "Israel must take them back overland on the same route it expelled them last month." The evictees were marched through the Zammara crossing into South Lebanon. But Leba-

non refused to accept them, and they have been stranded since between Israeli and Lebanese army lines.

Both Lebanon and Israel have blocked international aid convoys from reaching the men.

The evictees have survived by smuggling food and medicine from nearby villages. On Sunday, in apparent anticipation of a long stay, they carried in a generator.

Two delegates of the Geneva-based Red Cross Saturday used an Augusta-Bell helicopter from the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon to reach the hillside camp. They checked the physical conditions of the evictees and evacuated two.

Syouri, who was the youngest of the deportees, was later taken by the Israeli army to a reunion with his family in the West Bank town of Hebron.

But the Palestinian with kidney problems, Zohair Labbadeh, 32, was denied entry by Israel.

After spending the night at a U.N. clinic in South Lebanon, he was moved by the Israeli army Sunday to a hospital in Marjayoun, a southern Lebanese

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PLO seen seeking Arab support to halt peace talks

CAIRO (Agencies) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) was reported early Sunday to seek Arab League backing to boycott U.S.-sponsored peace talks unless Israel repatriates hundreds of expelled Palestinians marooned in South Lebanon.

The proposal announced in a Tunis newspaper interview by Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, will be among options before more than half the Arab foreign ministers meeting Monday at the Arab League's Cairo headquarters.

The PLO requested Monday's urgent meeting of the 21-member league's foreign ministers to consider ways to force Israel to repatriate the more than 400 stranded Palestinians it expelled on Dec. 17.

Alternatives are limited. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat said last week the PLO would ask the ministers to urge the United Nations to punish Israel for ignoring a Security Council resolution demanding repatriation.

But the Arabs know that the United States would veto sanctions if they were proposed in the U.N. Security Council. Last week the council failed to agree even on a non-binding statement de-

manding that Israel accept the evictees' return.

Nevertheless, a symbolic appeal for sanctions might emerge from the Arab League meeting.

But the PLO may have decided that linking the expulsions with continuation of the peace talks could be more fruitful.

Mr. Kaddoumi got support of linkage last month from key Arab countries at a meeting in Cairo. He and the foreign ministers of Egypt, a prime mediator with the Israelis, and Israel's front-line negotiating partners Syria, Lebanon and Jordan said continued refusal to reverse the expulsions could jeopardise the peace talks that began in October 1991.

On Sunday, Mr. Kaddoumi told the Tunis newspaper Al Sahab he will seek to formalise that commitment. He said he would put before the Arab League a document saying resuming the talks as scheduled on Feb. 20 is infeasible so long as the Palestinians remain in Lebanon.

"Our position is clear cut," Mr. Kaddoumi said. "There will be no participation in these talks without the return of all the

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Americans see Mideast as priority

DUBAI (R) — Most Americans think U.S. President-elect Bill Clinton should put Middle East issues near the top of his agenda when he takes office later this month, an opinion poll showed Sunday.

The poll for the Arabic-language Al Wasat magazine said 61 per cent of Americans surveyed said "finding a successful competition to the continuing peace talks in the Middle East" was a high priority for Mr. Clinton's incoming administration.

The figure compared with 39 per cent who saw ensuring stability in newly democratic Eastern European states and 34 per cent who saw intervention to end bloodshed in Bosnia as high priorities.

The poll, commissioned by the London-based Al Wasat from U.S. firm John Zogby Group International, also found 42 per cent of Americans thought the United States should "be committed to an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip." Thirty-seven per cent disagreed.

More than half those questioned in the survey said Israel and the Palestinians were equally to blame in their dispute. Seventeen per cent blamed the Palestinians and 10 per cent Israel.

More than 60 per cent said they did not agree that the United States should maintain its current annual level of \$3 billion of aid to Israel.

erned by personal reasons and motivated by unjustified hatred."

Iraqi newspapers echoed the same defiant theme Sunday.

Al Thawra daily said Mr. Bush was trying to turn the fight into below the 32nd Parallel into "something permanent."

The exclusion zone was declared by Mr. Bush on Aug. 27 and supported by the allies. The U.S. says — the zone is designed to protect Shiite Muslim dissidents sheltering there since their failed rebellion against the Iraqi regime after the 1991 Gulf war.

"The defeated Bush will not be able to impose his status quo on triumphant and firm Iraq," said Al Thawra's mouthpiece of the ruling Arab Baath Socialist Party.

"Iraq, which was not shaken by the 30-state aggression, will not be shaken by a defeated dying person who is taking his last yellow desperate breaths," it said.

Al Jumhuriyah newspaper said Mr. Bush's actions in the closing days of his administration were an attempt to embroil Mr. Clinton in foreign issues, the Iraqi News Agency said. Mr. Clinton

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Sixteen-year-old Palestinian expellee Bassam Syouri (left) who was allowed to return home by the Israeli occupation authorities is welcomed by family members in his hometown of Hebron in the occupied West Bank (AFP photo)

House passes anti-corruption law in collision course with Senate

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday passed a draft law on "illegal acquisition of wealth" as amended by its Judiciary Committee, voting down most of the amendments the Upper House of Parliament (Senate) made on the law before it sent it back to the House.

The draft law, which was approved by the House in its last ordinary session but was rejected by the Senate, defines "illegal acquisition of wealth" as any increase in the liquid and fixed assets that "people included in the law, their spouses and minor children" attain through abuse of office.

Government officials covered by the draft law are: The prime minister, ministers, speakers and

members of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, senior government officials and chairmen of the boards of public corporations and companies in which the government's share exceeds 40 per cent and members of the judiciary.

The Senate had recommended excluding parliamentarians from the law but the House endorsed the recommendation of its Judiciary Committee to keep its members covered by the draft law.

The Senate had also proposed limiting the definition of the "illegal acquisition of wealth" to "unlawful increase in the wealth of 'persons covered by the law' — leaving out the fortunes of spouses and minor children as originally endorsed by the House.

The Judiciary Committee recommended that the House reject the Senate's amendment and

the House voted in favour of its recommendation.

The draft law will be sent back to the Senate and a joint session of Parliament will be held to vote on the final version of the draft law if the Senate insists on its amendments. A two-third majority will then be needed to pass the draft law.

The draft law calls for the creation of a "department against illegal acquisition of wealth" at the Ministry of Justice to "receive and study declaration of financial status, complaints and explanations" in cooperation with special committees appointed by the Higher Judiciary Council.

It requires "concerned agencies" to provide the proposed department with the names of people covered by the law, and

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Shootouts, clan clashes reported in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — U.S. marines opened fire on Somalia who tried to ambush them under cover of darkness Sunday, killing three of the gunmen, a spokesman reported.

The fight was one of several shootouts reported overnight in lawless Mogadishu, including clashes among rival clans.

Rumours swept Mogadishu that dozens had died in the clan fighting, but the reports could not be confirmed. Scattered gunfire persisted in parts of the capital after dawn.

The Marines, who landed amid chaos in Somalia one month ago, say the mission to pacify the country and secure distribution routes for famine relief shipments is weeks ahead of schedule. But skirmishes still occur nightly in Mogadishu, and aid agencies say their operations are still impeded by looting and violence.

Chief Warrant Officer Eric Carlson said there were no

Marine casualties in Sunday's firefight.

He said a marine observer atop a tall building spotted seven Somalis with weapons about 1 a.m. in an alley adjacent to the former U.S. embassy compound, now headquarters for Marines in Somalia.

A Marine patrol was diverted to the area. The Somalis detected the Marines moving towards them and got into an ambush position, spokesman Carlson said.

The Marine on the observation post opened fire to break up the ambush, killing one Somali and wounding another, he said. The Somalis then fired on the Marine patrol and the Americans returned fire, killing two more Somalis.

The spokesman said the Marines withdrew after civilians began coming out of their homes.

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Bad weather hampers tanker salvage efforts

SUMBURGH, Shetland Islands (Agencies) — Near-hurricane force winds and churning seas Sunday battered the oil tanker shipwrecked in the Shetland Islands and hampered salvage efforts.

Also Sunday, British news reports said the tanker's crew tried to get the engine going for two hours before summoning help and a former captain of the Braer said he would not have taken the vessel through the Shetland Islands during Tuesday's hurricane.

The Shetland Islands Council said Sunday wildlife casualties from the 40-kilometre long oil spill now amounted to 535 dead birds and two grey seals since the tanker ruptured Tuesday.

The toll of birds was expected to rise to the thousands, said Peter Ellis, director of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds for the Shetlands, where 61 species of birds breed.

Shetlanders stopped anti-pollution experts spraying a huge oil slick spreading from the Braer because they feared toxic dispersants could damage their health.

The slick has led to a ban on fish farming and fishing in the islands at the northernmost tip of the British Isles.

Fresh gales were heading towards the islands and salvage crews doubted it they would be unable to board the vessel, which is starting to break up, for at least two days.

Geert Koffeman, spokesman for the Dutch salvage company Smit Tak, said he believed most of the cargo of 85,000 tonnes of oil remained on board. "I hope only one tank is pierced and 11 are intact," he told a news conference.

After a protest meeting Friday, representatives of the islanders

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Bosnia talks open despite Muslim leader's absence

GENEVA (R) — Talks widely billed as a last chance for peace settlement in war-torn Bosnia resumed Sunday, without Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic who left for an Islamic meeting in Senegal just as they were to begin.

But diplomats said peace prospects appeared to have improved slightly after the Serbs told mediators Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance in a fresh proposal that they agreed to demilitarisation of Bosnia under international supervision.

Mr. Izetbegovic, who had hesitated over whether to come at all after a Muslim minister was killed by a Serb gunman in Bosnia on Friday, flew to Geneva Sunday morning but left hours later as other participants held up by fog were arriving.

Opening the delayed meeting, Mr. Vance said he and co-chairman Owen of the European Community (EC) "share with you today our profound sorrow at

the heinous killing" of Bosnia's Deputy Prime Minister Hakiya Turajlic.

"We condemn this outrageous action," he added. "The time has come to put an end to all such criminal acts and for all parties to move forward with the peace process."

Just minutes before the talks began, Mr. Izetbegovic had discussed his departure with Lord Owen in a hallway at Geneva's Palais des Nations before telling reporters: "I am going to Dakar. I will be back tomorrow night."

The Dakar meeting is partly to discuss the plight of the Bosnian Muslims, which has outraged the Islamic World. Mr. Izetbegovic said he has leaving behind Foreign Minister Haris Silajdzic, who was fully empowered to negotiate in his place.

Also attending the negotiations were Radovan Karadzic of the rebel Bosnian Serbs, Croat leader Mate Boban, President Dobrica Cosic of the rump Yugoslav fed-

eration and President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia. President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia was expected Monday.

Lord Owen, who appeared disappointed, said Mr. Izetbegovic had waited four hours for other leaders to show up but his departure would not cripple the talks. "No drama, I'm afraid, but just a slight hiccup," he told reporters. "It's not a walkout."

Mr. Karadzic, who arrived through one door as the Muslim chief was leaving by another, declared: "I have not come to leave. I have come to negotiate."

Papers submitted by the insurgents suggested the Serbs not only agreed to the idea of demilitarisation but also accepted the formation of a central government formed with the Muslims and Croats with equal representation of all three.

Although the Serbs insist they want Bosnia-Herzegovina to be a "composite state" with "three constituent peoples and three

constituent units," according to the documents, the diplomats said they appeared to be moving towards compromise.

In Assisi, Italy, Pope John Paul II on Sunday denounced a "mad craving for power" in Europe and condemned the use of religion as a pretext for violence and prayed for an end to war in Bosnia.

The Pope had invited Muslims, Jews, European Catholic Church leaders and other Christians, including Orthodox, for a weekend of fasting and prayer to the hill-town birthplace of peace-promoting St. Francis.

On Sunday, he delivered one of his strongest denunciations of the war and its atrocities since fighting started almost a year ago, pitting Bosnian Serbs, who are predominantly Orthodox, against Muslims and Croats, a mainly Catholic people.

"The current war in the Balkans is a special accumulation of sins," the Pope said in his homily during a mass in Assisi.

Abu Shakoush' strikes again in Wihdat

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — After a lull of almost two months, a criminal nicknamed "Abu Shakoush" (hammerman) appeared to have struck again, this time in the densely populated Wihdat area in northern Amman suburbs. The attacks bore all the hallmarks of the previous incidents attributed to the elusive criminal.

Local reports said the attack occurred in the early hours of Dec. 30 at a paint shop in the main street of Wihdat. Neighbours found the shopowner lying in a pool of blood with heavy injuries to the skull inflicted with an apparently blunt instrument, possibly a hammer.

An unspecified amount of cash and a cheque for JD 1,000 were missing from the shop, according to reports. The victim suffered major injuries, which warranted his hospitalisation under intensive care. No detail was immediately available on his condition Sunday.

Neighbours, quoted in the local press, speculated that the attack could have involved more than one criminal since the victim was heavily built and could have resisted an assault mounted by a lone assailant. At least in one previous attack, the victim reported that the assailant was accompanied by an accomplice.

An informed source confirmed that there was "an attack in Wihdat similar to several others in Amman in the past three months." The source would not elaborate, except that investigations had intensified along with increased patrols and security checks.

Before the Wihdat incident, the last attack attributed to "Abu Shakoush," believed to be an Egyptian national or someone speaking with an Egyptian accent, occurred on Nov. 4 when a building material merchant was hit on the head with what appeared to have been a hammer. The merchant was robbed of JD 500.

In earlier attacks, a pharmacist was killed and an owner of a liquor store went into a coma after suffering serious injuries. The victims of two other earlier attacks were seriously wounded but are able to provide police with descriptions of the assailant.

All attacks, except for one, occurred in the early hours and the victims were all elderly men who were alone in their shops and the weapon used in all cases was believed to be a hammer. All victims were hit on the head. In the attack against the pharmacist, a medium-size blood-stained hammer was left behind at the scene of the crime.

Police believe that "Abu Shakoush" is dark-skinned and medium-built. He apparently wears a head-dress which could be used to hide his facial features. One victim has described him as "clean-shaven and with a big moustache."

Attacks have occurred on Sept. 13 at a spare-parts shop, Oct. 8 at a supermarket, Oct. 19 at the

liquor shop, Oct. 29 at a pharmacy and Nov. 4 at a building materials shop.

Big-scale robbery does not appear to be the motive in the attacks. Cash boxes were left untouched and only the victims were relieved of their wallets containing small amounts of money, which has led to speculation that "Abu Shakoush" could be mentally deranged.

All indications are that the attacks were meticulously planned and perfectly timed. Experts have noted that there are numerous types of "mental derangement" and it is not strange that such disturbed persons are able to think and plan carefully.

The absence of attacks since Nov. 4 had brought a sense of relief among shopkeepers in the capital, but the Wihdat incident has done away with it.

Shopowners in several areas said they had taken a collective decision not to open early or remain late unless they were together.

Pharmaceutical company makes breakthrough

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A Jordanian pharmaceutical company became the first in the Arab World to develop the technology for making sustained release anti-inflammatory tablets.

Munther Salameh, the marketing director at Dar Adawa pharmaceutical company said that Diclogesic Retard Tablets for inflammatory and rheumatic diseases will be available in pharmacies by the end of January.

"The manufacturing of Diclogesic Retard Tablets required advanced technology involving the manipulation of certain polymers so that part of the polymer would dissolve slowly and the active ingredient is released slowly over a period of 12 hours," Mr. Salameh said. He added that slow release capsules are predominant in Jordan but that the technology



Tablets manufactured and bottled for sales

for the manufacturing of slow release tablets is very different. The entire manufacturing process took place in Jordan, according to pharmacist Ahmad Dallal, the sales promotion and training

manager at Dar Adawa. "Bio-equivalent and bio-availability tests were conducted to prove that the tablet would release drugs without fluctuations, and to check the amount of active ingredient that the body would absorb from the intestinal system," Mr. Dallal said. "The plan now is to export to other Arab countries, and to some European countries."

Mr. Salameh said that although costs of manufacturing were high, the cost for the consumer is very reasonable at JD 1.6 for a packet of 10 tablets. "Slow release type dosage give the patient continuous relief for what could potentially be continuous pain."

For rheumatic and inflammatory diseases pain could wake a person at night. This type of tablet controls the pain overnight. It is also convenient over periods of fasting," he said.

Jordan Valley dams to fill to capacity

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) is confident that the dams of the Kingdom will be filled with water during the current winter season as in the past.

Dr. Abdul Aziz Wishah, JVA secretary general, told the Jordan Times that most of the dams are presently half full due to the increase in recent rains. The King Talal Dam rose to 64 million cubic metres, up from 58 million towards the end of November 1992. The dam which has a capacity of 82 million cubic metres was filled to the brim in last winter season, forcing the JVA to pass on the surplus water to the fields and the Jordan River.

"We are applying a programme that would ensure the replenishment of all dams in the country," Dr. Wishah said.

Last November Dr. Wishah announced that the JVA has prepared all the designs for a new dam to be built at Karamah in the

central Jordan Valley region.

The new dam is expected to have a capacity of 55 million cubic metres of rain water, collected from the wadis and the Zarqa River flowing towards the Jordan Valley, Dr. Wishah said. He noted that the Karamah dam was one of several others designed to save water for irrigation purposes. A tender for the construction of the dam will be announced soon as the JVA continues to work on a second project aimed at raising the walls of a neighbouring dam at Kafrein. Designs for the second project will be ready in March of this year and a tender will be announced soon afterwards, said Dr. Wishah.

At the same time, he said, the JVA is in the process of building the Wadi Rajil dam and was cooperating with the Armed Forces to the construction of Swaga dam which is due to be completed by June this year to store up to 3.5 million cubic metres of water.

Arab League meeting condemns Palestinian eviction

CAIRO (Petra) — The head of

Jordan's delegation to an Arab League sponsored meeting on the Palestinian question opened in Cairo Sunday urged Arab countries to provide all possible assistance to the Palestinians to enhance their steadfastness in their homeland.

Adel Isheid called on the U.N. Security Council to take practical measures to ensure the implementation of Resolution 799 concerning the repatriation of the 415 Palestinian evictees.

Mr. Isheid was addressing the opening session of a week-long meeting attended by Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and the Arab League secretariat which gathered to discuss Palestinian affairs. The meeting, the 49th by countries hosting Palestinian refugees, a statement was issued condemning Israel's deportation order which they said violates all international laws.

In discussing the question of the evictees, Mr. Isheid, who is director of the Foreign Ministry's

Palestinian Affairs Department, said that the escalation of Israel's repressive measures against the Palestinians clearly manifests Israel's desire to avoid peace with the Arab countries or the Palestinians. Israel has committed its most despicable crime against humanity by expelling the 415 Palestinians from their homeland and its actions constitute a flagrant defiance of the world community and international laws including the fourth Geneva convention, noted Mr. Isheid.

Economic and social conditions of the oppressed Palestinians under Israeli rule, Israel's Judaisation programme in Jerusalem, the financial situation of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), and the agency's services to the Palestinian refugees in its five fields of operations are all on the agenda.

Also to be discussed is the current Israeli settlement of Jewish immigrants and Israel's use of water.

Governor hears Baqaa complaints

SALT (Petra) — Baqaa Governor

Eid Al Qataneh Sunday discussed with the Baqaa camp improvement committee the situation in the camp and the requirements of the camp and the surrounding areas. The committee cited the weak electric power and the damage it causes to household appliances and electrical equipment, lighting of streets, shortage of water supply, particularly in summer, and the maintenance of water network and establishing a hospital in Baqaa area. The committee also called on the governor to arrange with

the education departments concerned to replace the old secondary girls school, which is built from asbestos, saying that it poses danger to some 500 girls students attending the school. They also called for ending the double shift schooling system, which is still applicable in the camp's schools due to the ever-increasing school population and limited school space. They further called on the governor to arrange with the authorities concerned to open a civil registration department and to set up youth centres, to be run by the Ministry of Youth.

JEA continues electric projects, runs customs course

TAFLEH (Petra) — The Jordan

Electricity Authority (JEA) will continue rural areas with electric power in light of priorities and availability of financial resources, Yassin Khasawneh, director of the JEA office in Tafleah said.

The authority is currently working on the electrification of two water projects in the governorate, and is lining Shaitam villages, the southern neighbourhood of Qadiseh and Al Majarra neighbourhood in Gharadil with electric power. The electrification plan will be implemented by JEA in cooperation with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and rural and basic

electrification department.

In a separate development a week long training course on customs procedures, organised by the customs department for 30 employees from the JEA, concluded Sunday. The training included registration of transactions, examination of goods and assessing their value, learning about documents needed for customs transactions, and customs audit regulation. At the end of their week long training, the JEA staff toured customs departments in Amman and the Queen Alia Airport where they obtained first hand information on the work in these centres.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Al Koura officials discuss water services

DEIR ABBE SAEED (Petra) — Heads of municipal councils in Al Koura district held a meeting at Kufr Al Maa Municipality Sunday to discuss services offered by the Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ). The heads of the council at the meeting which was attended by director of the water departments in Irbid and Al Koura stressed the need to renew the water network in the district and connecting some villages with the network. They also called for implementing the sewerage network in the district to protect the citizens' health and save their money.

Journalists express gratitude for pay rise

AMMAN (Petra) — Editors, reporters and correspondents of the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Sunday expressed their thanks to His Majesty King Hussein for Saturday's Cabinet decision which approved granting them a 30 per cent overtime allowance. In a cable sent to King Hussein, Petra Director General Khaled Mahadeen stressed that Petra staff would continue to persevere in their work, and he affirmed their loyalty and allegiance to Jordan and the King. Last week, workers at Petra staged a work stoppage, demanding that the government grant them the 30 per cent allowance in line with their colleagues at Jordan Television. Also the Jordan Press Association held an emergency meeting to discuss the issue. On Saturday, the Cabinet responded to these demands and approved granting employees at Petra the overtime allowance.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- Exhibition entitled "Latin American Countries in France" at the French Cultural Centre.
- Exhibition of watercolour paintings by Jordanian artist Salam Kanaan at Riwaq Al Balqa Gallery for fine arts, Al Falek City.

LECTURE

- Lecture, in Arabic, by former Iraqi prime minister Saddam Hussein entitled "Remarks: the Path of Unity" at the Scientific and Cultural Centre of Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation — 6 p.m.

Problems with Arab renaissance and Arab orthodox compared

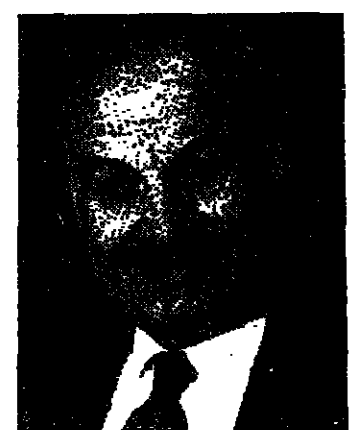
By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In a lecture entitled "The Arab orthodox renaissance goes hand in hand with the Arab renaissance" held at the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation, Dr. Raouf Abu Jaber, chairman of the Orthodox Arab Society pointed to the common historical background between the two movements especially in their unsuccessful efforts to liberate themselves from colonialism.

"There is an outstanding similarity between the Arab renaissance and the Orthodox renaissance: Both are still suffering from dissension and multiplicity of governing authorities," Dr. Abu Jaber said. "On the one hand, the Arab stand regarding the social and political status has not changed, there are still several states and more than one leader governing the Arab world; on the other hand the orthodox community's leadership, the patriarchate in Jerusalem is governed by Greeks in its council, which is known as the holy sepulchre brotherhood, while only four out of the 94 members are Arabs."

One participant voiced discontent over the inertia of the orthodox leadership in Jordan in opposing the orthodox church's sale of church properties in Jerusalem to the Israeli authorities.

The Greek patriarchate has re-



Dr. Raouf Abu Jaber

cently sold whole districts, including Rahavia district in West Jerusalem and earlier sold the Al Musallab district.

Though admitting the malpractices of the patriarchate leadership in the occupied territories, Dr. Abu Jaber said that it is basically due to the fact that Greek nationalists can obtain Jordanian nationality easily. He said that during the fifth conference by the Arab orthodox community held last month in Amman amendments to Jordanian law were called for, as was the reactivation of the orthodox central council and the higher orthodox executive committee to take charge of all matters related to the community on both sides of

the river. "In the fifth general conference of the orthodox community held last month, there was a promise by the government to back up the cause of the Arab orthodox," Dr. Abu Jaber told the Jordan Times: "We hope that there will be certain amendments to the constitution regarding the Arab orthodox to restore their rights in having a pure Arab Council as it is the case in Syria."

Dr. Abu Jaber also pointed to the failure of the two groups to come up with successful solutions to crucial issues that hamper the renaissance movement particularly in the implementation of a coherent strategy for the betterment of their situation.

"Differences still exist over the best way to get out of the deadlock: Some think that the first step would be to Arabise the patriarchate, while others consider that the priority should go to the training and education of Arab orthodox clergy to be able in the future to occupy leading posts."

According to Dr. Abu Jaber, these similarities are a natural consequence of the movements' efforts to liberate themselves from colonialism; "Both are seeking to build a strong foundation to a national Arab life free of hatred and sectarianism that would restore to them their past glory," he said.

remain under the loose control of local militias.

In the northwestern city of Hargeisa, Muslim fundamentalists stoned to death five women accused of adultery and whipped a sixth, U.N. spokesman Farouk Mawlawi told reporters.

Quoting a U.N. coordinator in the city, he said a council of elders was meeting Sunday to discuss the attack, which took place on Thursday. "We understand that there is a great deal of opposition to what has happened," he added.



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control department, and the administrative development department, which will consist of two divisions, one for information and studies and the other for organisation. The decision to establish these two new depart-

ments was taken during a meeting chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Thouran Hindawi. The meeting discussed the administrative control concept and the terms of reference of the internal audit and

control department. The decision to establish an internal audit and control department is in line with the prime minister's directives to set up such units to improve administrative performance, at the government departments.

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No compromises

THERE ARE many issues facing the Arab World and its foreign ministers and representatives meeting in Cairo today, but nothing more pressing than the stand-off resulting from Israel's expulsion of more than 400 Palestinians to South Lebanon.

The expellees, stranded for the last 24 nights in freezing temperatures in a hillside camp between Israeli and Lebanese military lines, do not just represent the arbitrary and arrogant practices of Israel; they are living examples of the hypocrisy that we have to put up with not only on the international scene but also on the Arab arena.

We have heard more than enough criticism of the double-standards of the United States and the West in their dealings with the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli conflict. We have been hearing it for decades and very little has changed on the ground. The inaction of the American-weighted United Nations Security Council towards forcefully implementing Resolution 799 demanding the return home of the Palestinian expellees symbolises the double-standards when seen against the Iraqi missile episode of the past few days.

But let us not overlook or sidestep the reality that the Arab World, while being vociferously critical of the Western approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict, has somehow done very little in practical terms to bring about any changes to the political givens that gave rise to the double-standards. The very fact that it took the Arab League 25 days to hold a meeting on the Dec. 17 Israeli expulsion of 415 Palestinians testifies to this fact, particularly that it was the Jewish state's largest ouster of Palestinians from their homeland in peace-time.

Today's Cairo meeting cannot simply afford to pressure the Palestinians into dropping their demand for a linkage between peace talks with Israel and the expulsions. One cannot simply urge the Palestinian negotiators to travel to Washington and resume the talks as if nothing has happened and hoping that somehow Israel could be persuaded to accept a compromise solution to the plight of the Palestinian evictees. To put it mildly, it is logical to expect the negotiators to stay in their comfortable hotel rooms in Washington and adopt a business-as-usual attitude while 400 of their compatriots are freezing in snow and cold back in the Middle East?

Indecisive action in Cairo today would only strengthen Israel's hands based on the conviction — supported indeed by what we have seen over the past decades — that the Arabs only pay lip-service to the Palestinian cause.

The crisis sparked off by the expulsions is not going to blow away soon and the suffering of the 400 plus Palestinians living in the squalid makeshift tent camp in South Lebanon is an open challenge to the Arab and international conscience.

It is time the Arabs came forth and delivered the goods in terms of collective action to ensure that Israel reverses its expulsion decision and permits the return of the evictees to their homes. Whatever has to be done to achieve this has to be done; there cannot be a compromise, peace talks or no peace talks.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Sunday criticised the United States' refusal to impose sanctions on Israel for rejecting U.N. Security Council Resolution 799. In a new development in the problem of the Palestinian evictees, the United States has assured Israel that it would not allow the Security Council to impose any penalties on it for rejecting the resolution, said the daily. Washington, which disregards the world community, is thus providing new evidence of its false claim that it protects the international legality, said the paper. The United States has threatened severe measures against Iraq for merely moving its missiles on its own territory which at the same time it is encouraging Israel to scoff at the world community and its resolutions, the paper added. Backed by the United States assurances, Israel will not hesitate to issue new threats to the Palestinians and abort the peace talks, said the daily. By encouraging Israel to commit further crimes, the United States is helping the Rabin government to pursue its blackmailing practices against the world community and the Arabs in particular, the paper added. In light of the new development, one can only ask what kind of peace is the one the United States is bragging about in the region at a time when it turns its back to the United Nations resolutions. The paper warned the Arab parties that Israel would from now on use the peace talks as a lever to pursue its blackmail on the Arabs and attain its goals in the region.

SAWT AL SHAAB daily tackled the coming meeting in Cairo by Arab foreign ministers, noting that the Arab-Israeli problem and Israel's practices should top the list of priorities. Israel is continually defying the world community in general and the Arabs in particular, and it offered a new evidence by rejecting Resolution 799, said the daily. Israel is being encouraged in its refusal to implement the resolution and repatriate the Palestinians by the U.S. administration which has now announced it would not impose any sanctions or penalties on Israel for its actions and its rejections of the U.N. resolution, the paper noted. The Arab foreign ministers ought to take these developments into consideration and look into ways to stop U.S. threats against Libya and Iraq, and should take practical steps to end inter-Arab differences, the paper urged.

Weekly Political Pulse

Taiwan's case for recognition

In view of the long-standing sensitivities and confrontations between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China (Taiwan), it appears almost sacrilegious to start thinking about the still unthinkable and propose the recognition of Taiwan as an independent state and accept all the trimmings that are usually associated with such recognition. Putting aside, for the time being, the claims of mother China on Taiwan, which are admittedly both historical and political, much water has passed under the bridge since the former nationalist regime in China under General Chiang Kai-Shek moved his political base to the island of Taiwan after the defeat of his regime at the hands of the communist forces more than four decades ago.

Ever since that era, many realities have been created and have become firmly established in Taiwan, that may or may not prejudice the final resolution of the endemic conflict between Taipei and Peking. By all acceptable international standards, Taiwan drifted into a new national and independent course that is reminiscent of similar developments in other parts of the world that broke up one nation into multi-states. The clearest evidence of this phenomenon was the Arab Nation that broke up into several Arab states. In spite of the continuous yearning entertained by the Arab peoples to reestablish one homeland and one united Arab Nation, there is a parallel recognition of the contemporary realities pointing to the undisputable fact that there are now many independent and sovereign Arab countries.

Against this backdrop, that has been repeated elsewhere in the world, there is no longer a justification to bury one's head in the

sand and pretend that there is no country called the Republic of China that has all the makings of a sovereign and independent state. This recognition need not prejudice the aspirations and yearnings of the Chinese people to reunite just as the Arab peoples persist in their efforts to forge a united or federated state comprising all the existing Arab countries. As a matter of fact, the entire world will rejoice when there is a national reconciliation between Taipei and Peking on the basis of which there could be unity between them.

Still, over and beyond these considerations, the Republic of Taiwan has now all the necessary elements and ingredients for earning and enjoying international recognition as a sovereign and independent state. In terms of its political, economic, military and political strengths, the Republic of China (Taiwan) is a country of 20 million people that has earned one of the highest marks ever enjoyed by the many countries that are members of the United Nations. Its wondrous economic achievements have indeed baffled friend and foe alike and have become the envy of many industrial giants, not to mention all developing countries. Its gross national product (GNP) has peaked to \$193 billion and its per capita income reached \$11,000, figures that are unmatched even by the greater majority of the developed countries. As to its foreign reserves, that reached the phenomenal level of \$89 billion in 1991, they have become the pride of the continent of Asia, including the south Far East rim that is currently enjoying the miracle of unprecedented industrial

growth. Even more impressive is the determined efforts of the Republic of China to pitch in the perpetual battle for economic resurrection of the poorer countries of the world through its multi-faceted technical and economic assistance programmes. The performance of Taipei on the international scene is therefore commendable and deserves the appreciation and recognition of the international community.

Clearly, the most cherished appreciation and recognition that can be bestowed on Taiwan and its fine, energetic and industrious people is to grant them recognition as part and parcel of the family of nations. Taiwan, therefore, has a place in the world and it has earned it with much sweat, determination and conviction. And the joy and pride of Taiwan should also be the pride and joy of the People's Republic of China as well since the two countries share the same history and will most likely share the same destiny in the future. The only effective way to nurture goodwill between Taipei and Peking is to accept Taiwan as an independent state and then make determined effort for reconstructing new bridges between the two Chinas, as is done elsewhere in the world where there has been a breakdown of unitary nations. As is, the international course being pursued vis-a-vis the "fraternal" conflict between Peking and Taipei can only lead to the perpetuation of the confrontation between them with no end in sight. There is therefore every reason to change course and apply a different perspective towards the two states till better tidings in the future bring them closer to one another once again.

The European Community's role in the Middle East

The London-based Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding (AABU), studying the political situation in the volatile Middle East, urges more European involvement in the current state of affairs, especially in the deadlocked Arab-Israeli peace talks. Following is a December report prepared by the council on the "duty" Europe has towards settling the Mideast problems:

THE CURRENT situation in the Middle East gives great cause for alarm. The slow progress of the peace talks so far is worrying. Over a year has passed and there is no sign that the originally envisaged agreement between Israel and the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation on Palestinian interim self-government, which should have been reached, according to the American timetable, by the first anniversary of the convening of the Madrid conference (October 1991), will be attained in the near future. Meanwhile, escalating violence threatens the Israel/Lebanon border area.

Settlement activity in Palestine and Golan Heights is increasing despite the undertakings of the new Israeli government. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and 300,000 Syrians are still denied the right to return to their often destroyed homes.

Hopes were raised by the election of the Labour government in Israel and they seemed to have been justified by the measures of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin soon afterwards. Yet the extent to which Israel has undertaken confidence-building measures, without which no progress can be achieved, is also questionable. While the new Israeli government has announced certain curbs upon settlement construction, these allow at least 10,000 housing units, already under construction, to be completed — potential homes for another 50,000 settlers and this is without considering those who might move into finished, but still vacant, properties. The freezing of Israeli settlement activity does not lead to their removal or abandonment. Furthermore, although Mr. Rabin promised to halt some settlement construction during the election campaign, there are more housing units being built in the occupied territories than at any other time in Israel's history. Indeed Mr. Rabin has said that

the government will not oppose the construction of privately-funded settlements.

We might add that the pledge to release 800 detainees has only been partially fulfilled, according to our information. The imaginative release of several thousand political prisoners and detainees out of a total number of 12,500, which would remove a cause for popular demonstrations and build confidence between the Palestinians and the Israeli military authorities, is yet to happen.

Demonstrations are still being suppressed with live ammunition, punitive taxation of the population continues and curfews are still widely used. The ability of the Palestinian population to move freely within the occupied territories, including access to East Jerusalem, is seriously hindered by Israeli military ordinances.

The Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding (CAABU) urges the British government and its community partners to intensify its activity to ensure the smooth progress of the peace process in accordance with stated European Community foreign policy. This policy is clearly laid out in three European Community declarations which make reference to the Middle East, namely the Venice Declaration of 1980, the Dublin Declaration of 1990 and the more recent Lisbon Declaration of June this year.

The Venice Declaration of 1980 stated: "The time has come to promote the recognition and implementation of the two principles universally accepted by the international community: the right to existence and to security of all the states in the region, including Israel, and justice for all the peoples which implies the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people." The declaration goes on to say: "The Nine stress the need for Israel to put an end to the territorial occupation which it has maintained since the conflict of 1967. ... They are deeply convinced that the Israeli settlements constitute a serious obstacle to the peace process in the Middle East. The Nine consider that these settlements, as well as modifications in population and property in the occupied Arab territories, are illegal under international law." The members of the European Commission should seek to influence the process and out-

come of the negotiations in directions which they believe to be proper, thereby complying with the statements made in the Venice Declaration.

Twelve years later, the Lisbon Declaration proclaimed: "The European Council reaffirms its support for the peace process launched in Madrid in October 1991 which provides a unique opportunity for peace. It is of paramount importance for the world, and Europe in particular, which has an essential role to play in the political and economic stability of the region." This same declaration reiterated "the commitment of the Community and its member States to play a constructive and active role in the peace process, in both its bilateral and multilateral tracks, based on the Community's well-known positions of principle."

These latter points are very important, embodying a sustained commitment to stand by certain principles. However the European Community still continues to do very little! CAABU believes the European countries can, and indeed should, play an active role in promoting a Middle East peace settlement as they promised and abandon their little more than passive role which is the situation at the present time.

Justice for the Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian people, living in or expelled from the territories occupied by Israel, implies recognition of their legitimate rights. This must include the Palestinian right to national self-determination. It also includes their human rights as guaranteed by international law and, more specifically, as stated in the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. These have retreated from the forefront of European preoccupations. Britain, with its strong historic responsibility for the current situation, has held the presidency of the European Community for the past six months and was thus in a powerful position to wield much influence on this issue. In actual fact London has done very little.

The initial success in breaking the longstanding deadlock in the Middle East peace process and in bringing the combatants to the conference table was achieved by America. The United States was obliged to put heavy economic and diplomatic pressure on Israel to attend the peace talks in Madrid in October 1991, following the understandings it reached with

the Arab states during the Gulf war.

Israeli Prime Minister Shamir's Aug. 1 conditional acceptance of a peace conference only really came from the unprecedented cooperation by the U.S. and former Soviet Union, which finally joined together to all but demand Israel join in the process. This took the form of their extraordinary joint statement at the Moscow summit at the end of July in which they both expressed their "strong" commitment to promote peace and equally "strong" conviction that this historic opportunity must not be lost. Such unanimity was more than Israel could withstand." (Middle East International No. 406, Aug. 16, 1991).

America also had considerable leverage in the light of Israel's request for a \$10 billion loan guarantee from the U.S. Treasury to resettle Soviet refugees. The Bush administration was very anxious to ensure that the loan guarantees were delayed, arguing that "the granting of such a loan guarantee at this time would seriously jeopardise the proposed international peace conference."

Despite the fact that the loan guarantees were promised, and were thus an indirect method of coaxing the Shamir government to Madrid, they have only recently been granted under the new Rabin administration was very anxious to ensure that the loan guarantees at this time would seriously jeopardise the proposed international peace conference."

Despite the fact that the loan guarantees were promised, and were thus an indirect method of coaxing the Shamir government to Madrid, they have only recently been granted under the new Rabin administration and that in return for a partial freezing of settlement activity. Mr. Shamir's real intention emerged after his failure in the election when he said: "I would have conducted negotiations for 10 years, and meanwhile we would have reached a half million (settlers) in Judea and Samaria."

The change in both the American and Israeli governments, and the rise to power of Mr. Clinton and Mr. Rabin respectively, has resulted in a relaxation of pressure on Israel to be more flexible in the peace process. Indeed there is now no real pressure on

Israel to be conciliatory from anywhere in the western world and hence the peace talks have almost stalled. Mr. Rabin has inherited Mr. Shamir's peace process and has not made any substantial concessions. The tone of the talks has changed but the substance has not.

Immediate action is essential. The European Community was invited to Madrid to be an active participant in both the bilateral and multilateral talks; let it now take up the challenge. Britain must take a firm lead and guide Europe towards a more active role in the Middle East peace process at a time when real peace is within the grasp of the parties concerned, provided momentum can be maintained.

The main obstacle to progress in the peace talks during the past year, as Mr. Shamir has tacitly admitted, has been the intransigence of the Israeli side. Pressure on Israel by the European Community and the British government could help produce the kind of concessions which would enable substantive progress to be made. This is not to suggest an alternative peace initiative, rather to nudge the existing peace process forward in accordance with the principles laid down in Madrid and in the European declarations.

Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, in his speech at the CAABU 25th anniversary meeting in October, suggested that the ending of both the Israeli settlements in the occupied territories and the Arab boycott of Israeli goods would serve as confidence-building actions. In fact, they are entirely different; the former is a blatant transgression of international law, while the latter is a legitimate method by which the Arab League today seeks to sustain pressure on Israel to give up the occupied territories and to accord the Palestinians their national rights. Therefore, it is an error to place them on an equal footing.

It is of crucial importance, from an economic standpoint, that the European Commission, and Britain in particular, develop closer relations with the Arab World. It is, quite clearly, in the interests of everyone concerned. As a recent publication on European relations points out, "helping the region's countries (Middle East) develop viable economies must be a major focus. In this sense the EC should encourage

attempts in the region to achieve economic diversification (so as to avoid an exaggerated long-term reliance on single sectors, such as agriculture in water-poor areas, or oil), even if there might be fears about the impact on European industry. Any such attempts should be placed in a regional framework. A concomitant aim must be the reduction of the gap between rich and poor states in the region. These two aims are mutually reinforcing" (from the "Middle East and Europe: an Integrated Communities Approach," edited by Gerd Nonnenman). Therefore, a stable and peaceful Middle East is a prerequisite for more vigorous interaction, and movement in the bilateral talks, a prerequisite for real discussions, in the multilateral, at which such subjects should be discussed.

In terms of security, we neglect the region at our peril. At present, there is a growing danger of widespread political instability in the region which threatens the established governments there and, by association, vital economic ties with Europe. This is as a result of unequal standards in the application of Security Council resolutions by the western powers, the rise of Islamic extremism and ever-widening disparities between rich and poor nations. The remarkable ambivalence so far displayed by the European Commission in its responses to the ethnic war in what was Yugoslavia and the plight of the Bosnian Muslims refugees (a situation that could produce the Palestine of the future) has exacerbated the problem. The Arab countries, as overwhelmingly Muslim states, have naturally been deeply disturbed both by events in the former Yugoslavia and by what they see as an inadequate response on the part of the European Community.

It is clear that Britain and Europe have a duty. Betrayal of our responsibilities bears unthinkable consequences. The Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding strongly believes that the above only serves to emphasise the need for an active European policy to induce Israel to take a more accommodating position, thus enabling the peace process to achieve its goals: a stable, secure and prosperous Middle East for the benefit of all the countries and peoples living there.

Bush's departure raises Saudi concerns

By Caryle Murphy

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — For this oil-rich kingdom, George Bush's four-year presidency was somewhat like having a dream team in Washington.

A Bush-led United States not only rushed to protect Saudi Arabia from a perceived military threat by Iraq during the 1990 Gulf war crisis, but it also has kept heat on Baghdad since the end of the war.

In addition, U.S. exports to Saudi Arabia have almost doubled in the last two years, sales of high-tech military equipment have gone ahead without much ado, and Washington has shown little interest in promoting domestic democratic reforms in this country's absolute monarchy. But the transition to a new team led by President-elect Clinton has caused uncertainty in Saudi Arabia as officials try to determine how their country might be affected under a Democratic administration that has said it intends to encourage democracy and human rights around the world and to be serious about environmental reform.

The fund-raising campaign interest of the United States in

having access to Saudi oil at market-prices — a priority that has undergirded U.S.-Saudi ties for almost 50 years — remains unchanged. As a result, this Arab country on the Gulf is likely to remain a key U.S. ally, with favoured access and status in Washington, for as long as it continues to be the largest supplier of oil imported for American consumers.

Another factor that bodes for continued close relations, particularly under a president-elect who emphasises the importance of international trade to the U.S. economy, is the growing Saudi market for U.S. goods.

U.S. merchandise exports to Saudi Arabia in 1992 are likely to reach \$7.4 billion — nearly double the \$4 billion in 1990 — according to estimates by the U.S. Commerce Department. These figures do not include service or military sales.

"This is a very fertile environment for American business," a diplomat here said in a recent interview. Saudi Arabia, whose oil sales to the United States are valued at around \$11.2 billion in 1992, is not only the largest

U.S. trading partner in the Middle East but now also one of the biggest in the world, he added.

"This means a lot of American jobs," the envoy said, noting that the United States is also the largest agricultural exporter to the kingdom.

By contrast, U.S. exports to Israel in 1992 are expected to be around \$3 billion, according to commerce figures.

Despite these common interests, some areas could bring difficulties to the Saudi-U.S. relationship under a Democratic White House. Both the Islamic religious liberal and a smaller group of liberal, westernised Saudis have said they are looking to the new administration for support in pushing their agenda of an increased political role in Saudi decision-making.

During a recent meeting with western journalists, a group of Islamic political activists who want Saudi Arabia to become a more fundamentalist Islamic state said the United States should support their demands because they are calling for increased respect for Islamic rights.

"Maybe the Democrats are a

bit better for human aspects, for human values. Democrats mean change and change might bring good ideas," said one Saudi university professor active in this movement.

"We have been trying for two years to improve (the Saudi government's) behaviour. We do not want to destabilise it. We do not want to overthrow it. But we have not been given any help by the West," said Ahmad Tuwaijri, a Riyadh-based legal consultant and former professor.

Other Saudis who do not want a stricter Islamic society but who share the Islamic activists' desire for more political participation also said they hoped the new U.S. administration would push for such changes.

"You are pushing this democracy and human rights in all the world, but when you come to this area, you say, 'No, we accept what your governments or your kings say,'" said a Jeddah businessman who asked not to be named, explaining: "We are in Saudi Arabia and we cannot say anything."

"With the Saudis, there is always a question: When are the

Americans going to push this democracy on us?" A Riyadh-based diplomat said, commenting on Saudi apprehensions about a new U.S. administration.

King Fahd promised last March to set up an appointed 60-man consultative assembly to advise the royal court and cabinet, but so far has named only that body's speaker.

Another area Saudi officials will watch closely is the Clinton administration's environmental and energy policies because of concern that the Democrats might seek to decrease gasoline consumption through higher fuel taxes. A senior Saudi official said recently that he had studied all such proposals aired during the U.S. election campaign, and concluded that all would be so politically unpopular they would never be enacted.

Still, Saudi Oil Minister Hisham Nazer clearly registered Saudi concern about such efforts last summer when he publicly denounced a European proposal for a so-called "carbon tax" as a way to clean up Europe's environment.

A third area in which Saudi-U.S. relations may run into bumps is the military. In the wake of the Gulf war, Saudi Arabia has not expanded or upgraded its own armed forces, or drawn up a regional security agreement with its Gulf neighbours, or concluded agreements with the United States about advance positioning of U.S. military equipment on Saudi soil.

As a result, this country is not much better prepared to defend itself from aggression than it was in 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait. Instead, it has preferred to purchase high-tech military equipment and weapons as a deterrent to future threats, purchasing \$16 billion worth of military equipment, including 72 F-15 jet fighters, from the United States since the Gulf war, according to the Washington-based Centre for Defence Information.

Whether Mr. Clinton, who like Mr. Bush has promised to curb the Middle East arms race, will continue such military sales is another question, mark over Saudi-U.S. relations — The Washington Post.

Rabin

(Continued from page 1)

towa where Israel's surrogate militia, the South Lebanon Army, is headquartered.

Mr. Labbadeh, an accountant at a private religious school in the West Bank town of Nablus, was arrested during an Israeli crackdown on Hamas.

Only hours before his detention, he had returned home from a lengthy hospitalisation. His family says one kidney has ceased functioning.

Dr. Abdul Aziz Rantisi, a Gaza Strip physician who serves as spokesman for the evictees, told reporters Sunday that he saw no difference between returning Palestinians to Israel by helicopter or overland.

"Israel's agreement to let the Red Cross visit us yesterday (Saturday) is an admission of its responsibility for the evictees in all fields," Dr. Rantisi said.

The nine wrongly-expelled men had packed their bags and said their farewells and were waiting for the helicopter when news came of Lebanon's decision.

"We have been waiting and we will wait more. I want to return even if I go back to jail because it is my homeland. It is better than anywhere else even if we are in jail," said Iyad Izzedine, 18. Most of the nine expect to go back to prison when they return.

In a minor concession to the expelled Palestinians, the Israeli government Sunday waived a 60-day deadline for lodging appeals against the expulsions.

The cabinet announcement came as Mr. Rabin was meeting with Mr. Gharekhan.

On Saturday Israel allowed International Red Cross officials through its lines to visit the evictees' camp, after insisting for two weeks that they go there via Lebanon.

At its regular weekly meeting Sunday, the cabinet dropped the deadline for appeals to military committees for the right to come home. The Palestinians have refused to appeal, fearing this would recognise the validity of the expulsions.

Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

has pledged to give priority to resolving America's economic woes.

Mr. Clinton, who will be inaugurated Jan. 20, has repeatedly voiced strong support for Mr. Bush's handling of the standoff with Iraq.

But the Iraqi spokesman, said that "there is a possibility for dialogue to achieve far from threats and intimidation" with the new administration.

U.S. officials said Iraq moved the missiles after an American fighter jet shot down on Dec. 27 and Iraqi warplane that had penetrated the "no-fly" zone.

The Bush administration has said there would be no advance warning the next time allied patrols in the Gulf were threatened.

Reports from U.S. navy officials aboard the USS Kitty Hawk in the Gulf also indicated that the missiles had been moved and that Iraqi jets had ceased "violating" the "no-fly" zone.

Iraq announced the ban on U.N. flights Thursday in a letter to the U.N. office in Baghdad. It complained that the United States, Britain and France had refused to allow Iraqi Airways to resume flights halted since the 1991 war.

The Security Council warned Iraq Friday of unspecified serious consequences if it does not rescind the ban.

It said the ban would seriously impede the work of U.N. teams involved in scrapping Iraq's weapons of mass destruction as well as of the UNIKOM set up after the Gulf war.

U.N. relief officials said the ban would also hinder the arrival of emergency medicine and food to Iraq.

"In the past we had chartered flights from Europe. In the last six weeks we have had more than 150,000 tonnes coming to Baghdad," Thomas Ekvall, representative of U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), said.

Hiroshi Matsumoto, acting coordinator of the U.N. Iraq coordination unit, said: "We have evacuated about 2,000 sick children for treatment abroad U.N. chartered planes."

But Mr. Matsumoto said it made no difference whether the U.N. hired planes from Iraqi Airways, as demanded by Baghdad, or from another country.

"If Iraqi aeroplanes are arranged we will use them," he said.

Meanwhile the commander of a U.S. battle group in the Gulf reminded Iraq that it would get no more warning against violating the "no-fly" zone.

"(Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein has certainly had a very thorough warning. He's had the one warning that is going to be given," said Rear Admiral Phil Coady, commander of the 10-ship battle group headed by the carrier Kitty Hawk.

House passes anti-corruption law

(Continued from page 1)

demands that those people make available to the department declarations of their fixed and liquid assets.

The department would refer evidence of unlawful acquisition of wealth to the "concerned agencies" for investigations and trial.

The draft law sets a punishment of minimum six months imprisonment to people who, "in bad intention," give a false report about wealth.

In its three-hour session, the House also passed a draft law amending the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) law for 1992.

The House endorsed the draft law as amended by its Judiciary Committee, giving fully-owned Jordanian companies the right to provide what it called "basic" telecommunications service for a "limited time."

The draft law renewed the TCC's monopoly over the "operation, maintenance and development" of telephone and telex services, but said the private sector can, upon the approval of the Cabinet, provide other related services.

Islamist Deputy Ali Al Fagir protested the involvement of the private sector in telecommunications services and warned of "confusion" and potential violation of the law by private sector companies.

Minister of Post and Telecommunications Jamal Saraih dismissed the deputies' fears saying the private sector would only provide telecommunication services that the government cannot provide for financial constraints.

Pointing out that the govern-

ment has embarked JD 250 million for the development of telecommunication services in the coming three years, the minister said the government does not have the funds to provide many of the new services provided by technological developments. He said the private sector would be providing such services.

Mr. Saraih said the treasury would benefit from such projects because private companies would have to pay part of their profits to the government as well as fees for using the public telecommunications networks.

"It is unfair to deny certain sectors services that we cannot provide," the minister said, adding the ministry could concentrate on providing and improving telephone services to areas that do not have them.

Endorsing the recommendation of the Judiciary Committee, the House also asked the government to a draft law on a general union for farmers.

House Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat asked the Agriculture

Committee to present the House with a report on a conflict that erupted with the Ministry of Agriculture over some visits it carried out to a number of government departments without informing the minister of agriculture.

Deputy Prime Minister Thaqan Al Hindawi said members of the committee visited some government departments and asked officials there "questions that gave the impression of questioning on wrong doings," and without informing the minister.

"That," he said, "is an administrative wrongdoing that I don't believe the House will approve," Mr. Hindawi said.

Minister of Agriculture Fayez Klasawneh said the committee's action violated the internal regulations of the House, while Committee Chairman Mohamad Alawneh argued that there was nothing in the "law or the constitution that prohibits citizens from visiting government departments."

The House will look into the issue in its next session on Wednesday.

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Bad weather

(Continued from page 1)

told the government-funded Marine Pollution Control Service of their fears about the dispersants, which are toxic in an undiluted state.

Islanders expressed concern over pollution carried by the wind and complained of nausea,

headaches and sore eyes and throats.

The local parliamentarian and two councillors went up in a helicopter to watch a test spraying close to the wreck where a fresh leakage of oil had been spotted. They said they were satisfied with the precautions taken.

Spraying was about to restart

when Malcolm Green, head of the local council, was warned that islanders might demonstrate on the runway used by the six Dakota spraying planes.

Spraying was immediately cancelled for the day — the calmest so far — and the planes returned to the Scottish mainland to sit out the coming storm. Spraying has been possible on only one day

since the tanker ran aground. A barge equipped with powerful pumps was scheduled to arrive in the Shetlands from Rotterdam Monday, and could begin removing oil from the tanker Tuesday. The heaviest slick is along the south point of mainland island, but a sheen of oil extended at least 40 kilometres north along the west coast of mainland.

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PLO

(Continued from page 1)

evictees." In all, 13 foreign ministers and Mr. Kaddoumi plan to attend Monday's meeting. The Arab League's other seven members will be represented by lower-level officials.

On the eve of the meeting, hundreds of students of Cairo University, including veiled women, marched from their campus to within sight of Israel's embassy to protest the expulsions.

Below the embassy, at the top of a high-rise apartment building, they burned an Israeli flag. They also chanted demands that Egypt break relations and expulsion of Ambassador Shimon Shamir, whom called a "pig."

Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Bouez told Cairo's Voice of the Arab radio in an interview aired Saturday that his country would urge the foreign ministers to call an Arab summit on the expulsions.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and his foreign minister Amr Musa both have ruled out an Arab summit soon, citing Arab disarray spawned by the Gulf war and other disputes.

Sunday's demonstrators marched from Cairo University to a bridge overlooking the embassy, which lies in a street sealed off by roadblocks.

"We reject any peace negotiations (with Israel). Jihad is the only solution to the Palestinian problem," shouted one of the marchers.

"Arab rulers, open the doors to jihad," said another. "Holy war is the only way to God. We swear we will restore Palestine to the Palestinians," shouted a third.

Egyptian police, who usually break up demonstrations, kept a close watch but did not intervene and the protest ended peacefully after one hour.

Foreign Minister Musa and Arab League Secretary-General Esmat Abdul Meguid said the Israeli expulsion of the Palestinians was a stumbling block on the road to peace.

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Klinsmann scores 4 to lead Monaco to top of French League

PARIS (R) — German marksman Jürgen Klinsmann scored four goals to lift Monaco to the top of the French Soccer League on Sunday.

Klinsmann, who raised his tally to 13 goals in 13 games, scored four goals to lift Monaco to the top of the French Soccer League on Sunday. He scored twice in the first half and twice in the second half to lead Monaco to a 4-1 victory over Auxerre.

Monaco, who have 28 points but lost to Lille, led the league. Auxerre, who won 3-1 at Sochaux, was fourth, one point behind Marseille.

Frenchman Eric Cantona's arrival and the recovery of Lee Sharpe have helped turn Manchester United into currently the

most formidable attacking unit in the English Premier League.

United moved to the top of the table with a 4-1 rout of Tottenham, taking their tally in the last three League matches to 12.

They moved level on points but better on goal difference than one-time runaway leaders Norwich who dropped back into third place behind both United and Aston Villa.

Nottingham Forest, however, have a game in hand which they play against lowly Sheffield Wednesday.

Cantona began with four goals in as many League games following his move from ailing champions Leeds in November when manager Alex Ferguson sought a striker to boost his attack.

In early November Ferguson's side were in 10th place but they have worked their way up the table with an unbeaten run of eight League matches, improving all the time and taking 20 out of a possible 24 points.

Sharpe, young player of the year in 1991 but out for most of last season with injury and a late starter this term because of viral meningitis, has helped to widen the attack with his fast breaks down the left.

Two of the goals against Spurs were scored by Denis Irwin and Paul Parker, members of a defence with the best record in the League.

With England midfielder Paul Ince also at last playing to potential, United no longer miss their inspirational veteran captain Bryan Robson, so often unavailable through injury.

Cantona was forced to leave the field Saturday three minutes before the end because of a knee injury but he was quick to reassure United he would bounce straight back.

"It is not too bad and I hope it will only keep me out of training for three or four days," he said.

Ferguson was cautious after the heartbreak of last season, when Leeds snatched the title from United's grasp.

"There's a long way to go — don't hold your breath," he said.

He pointed to Aston Villa's win at Liverpool Saturday. "That's a tremendous result and makes them as big a favourite as us."

Second-placed Villa's League record this season is almost identical to United's. Both have won 11, drawn eight and lost four of their 23 matches and scored 34 goals, but United have conceded only 18 to Villa's 25.

Striker Dean Saunders, who joined Villa from Liverpool in September, scored the winner after the home side had taken a first-half lead.

Delighted Villa boss Ron Atkinson said: "I can't think of a time when I've been a goal down at Anfield and come back and won it."

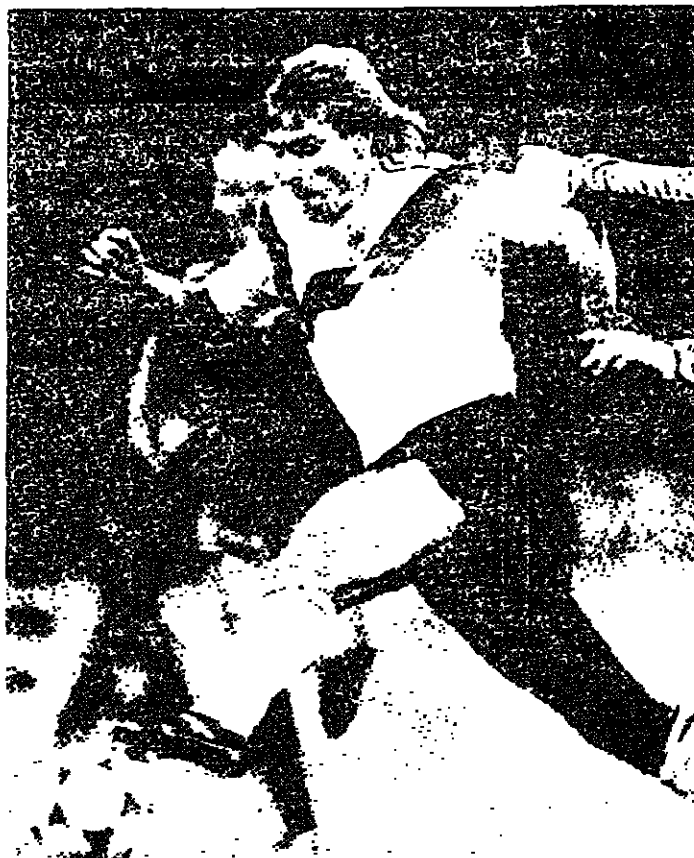
Liverpool's Graeme Souness said his side, so tight at the back when they dominated the English game in the 1980s, were let down by defensive mistakes. They have the most prolific attack with 36 goals, but have conceded 35.

"It's down to defending. It's no good doing the magic at one end if we are letting the goals in," he said.

Queen's Park Rangers' 36-year-old captain Ray Wilkins faces a long spell on the sidelines after suffering a suspected broken shin bone in a training accident Saturday morning.

"I was turning for a ball when my studs in the ground," said Wilkins, who watched from the director's box as his side won 1-0 at Middlesbrough.

Manager Gerry Francis said: "It was a freak accident. Wilkins could have a cracked fibula."



Unstoppable Jürgen Klinsmann

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Saby extends lead, Salonen crashes

PARIS (R) — Bruno Saby of France increased his lead in the Paris-Dakar Rally in Algeria by winning the longest stage as Finnish challenger Timo Salonen crashed spectacularly and was forced to retire.

Former rallying world champion Salonen, who had been third in his Citroen, was not hurt but his British co-driver Fred Gallagher had to be flown back to Paris.

Officials said Gallagher had a suspected fractured vertebrae and was being taken to Paris in an air ambulance.

Vatanen, who had dropped to 13th after a series of punctures in Wednesday's stage, moved up to seventh but the Finn, four times Paris-Dakar winner, is 7-1/2 hours adrift with little prospect of catching Saby in the remaining six days of racing.

Lartigue remained second overall. He took third place in the stage, closing to within seven minutes 32 seconds of Saby by the finish, but is one hour 38 minutes 24 seconds behind overall.

With Salonen's departure, Japan's Kenjiro Shinozuka moved into third place overall in his Mitsubishi, over four hours behind the leader.

Stephane Peterhansel of France kept the overall lead in the motorcycle section but was content to settle for third place in the stage behind Jordi Acarons of Spain and Thierry Charbonnier of France.

Martinez downs Maleeva; Kulti wins S. Australian Open

BRISBANE (AP) — Conchita Martinez of Spain powered her way to a straight sets victory over Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria Sunday in the final of the \$150,000 Danone Australian Women's Hardcourt Tennis Championship.

Top-seeded Martinez used her deep groundstrokes to wear down an inconsistent Maleeva 6-3, 6-4 and win the 15th title of her career.

She later teamed with Larisa Neiland of Latvia to defeat Americans Kimberly Po and Shannan McCarthy 6-2, 6-2 in the doubles final.

With her victory the 20-year-old Spaniard leapfrogged to seventh in the world past American Jennifer Capriati, who was inactive this time.

"I really needed this title to lift my confidence, so I'm very happy," said Martinez, who played with increasing aggressiveness as the event progressed.

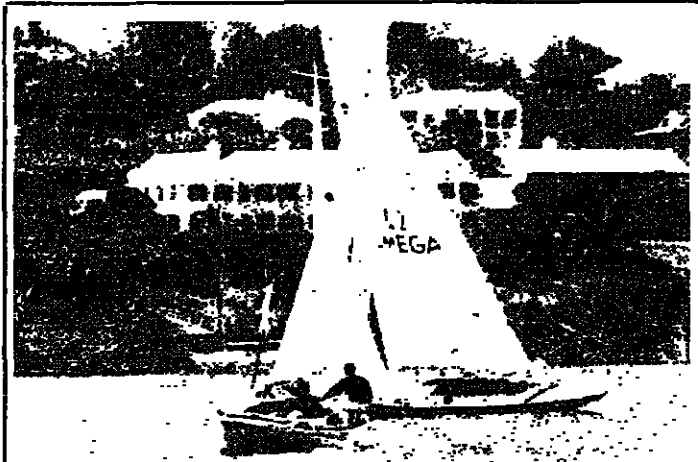
Martinez will not play another tournament before the Australian Open starts in Melbourne.

Maleeva had been aiming for the second title of her career and would have moved into the top 15 for the first time if she had won. Instead, her ranking moved to 17th, one place behind her elder sister Katerina.

Maleeva wore strapping on a thigh injury, but appeared to move freely.

"It didn't bother me at all during the match," she said. "Conchita just played better. Next time maybe."

Meanwhile, former champion Nicklas Kulti won the South Australian Open tennis title Sunday with a 3-6, 7-5, 6-4 comeback win over Swedish compatriot Christian Bergstrom.



New Zealander Russell Coutts lifted the prestigious Omega Gold Cup 1992, in a week of hectic competition in Bermuda, acclaimed as "the most exciting match race sailing in recent years" by veteran observers. Coutts bagged \$30,000 and an 18k solid gold Omega Speedmaster, while each of the three crewmen were awarded an Omega steel and 18k gold Speedmaster Chronograph. The Omega Gold Cup is an unique event because it offers the only "Pro-am" format in the sport, whereby 8 top ranked "seeded" skippers meet 8 "unseeded" skippers. The format allows less experienced skippers a chance to compete against the world's best and possibly move up in rankings.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY JANUARY 11, 1993
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: This is a day when influences keep changing so that you would be wise to make a special point of being aware and alert to undercurrents so that you can quickly take the advantage offered.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get rid of unfinished tasks before you look into new avenues and outlets that appeal to you in your practical affairs, plan upcoming action.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Think about how to present undone tasks so you will be able to put your time and attention on some important ways to better perform duties.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Consider the various options you have where some important matter is concerned and make a change even though it may be a dramatic one to be more successful.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You need to have some new life in your associations and now is the time to find one more practical than present contacts to include in your group.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A job has just about been completed and you have the chance to put your efforts and energies into some different worthwhile directions so seek them out.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A pleasure is past that has meant much to you but even more agreeable recreations can now be yours so be on the quiver for, accept them.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You need to have a more wellrounded sense of what needs to be accomplished at your residence so don't concentrate so much on some facet.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Wind up whatever communications that have been unattended to early in the day, then you will later be able to get into more interesting ones that have arisen.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Whatever unpaid bills and obligations you have should be gotten out of the way early so you can get into some advanced practical opportunities.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You are inclined to dwell too much on the past today and if you do you can lose out on some new personal chance to advance your interests.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Don't fuss and fret about what you cannot help but think out a workable course of action where you will be able to feather your nest.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Prepare yourself for some more extensive condition where your worldly position is involved and make sure you do something as a solid citizen.

THE BETTER HALF

By Harris

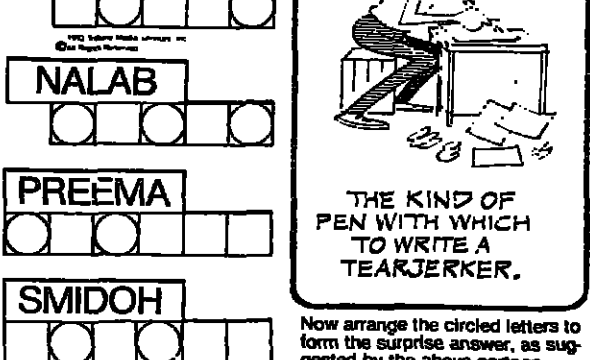


"Your marriage must be very romantic. Someone carved little hearts in your tartar!"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Kent Arnold

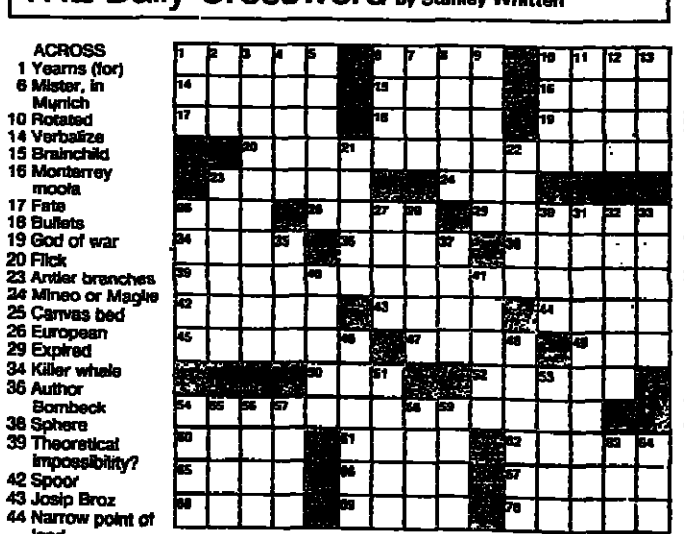
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: CROUP SNARL BEFALL DITHER
Answer: How employees go for that five o'clock whistle—ALL OUT

THE Daily Crossword by Stanley Whitten



ACROSS
1 Years (for)
6 Miser in Munich
10 Rotated
14 Verbalize
15 Brainchild
16 Monterey movie
17 Fats
18 Bullets
19 God of war
20 Flick
23 Antler branches
24 Mineo or Magie
25 Canvas bed
26 European
29 Expired
34 Killer whale
36 Author Bornbeck
38 Sphen
39 Theoretical impossibility?
42 Spoor
43 Joop Brox
44 Narrow point of land
45 Amen
47 Superman's lady
48 Afterthoughts letters
50 After wye
52 Nautical pole
54 Type of study
60 On the briny
61 Rocker Ant
62 Swindley
65 Football play
66 Pleasant
67 Mississippi has four
68 Snack
69 Young adult
70 Button for bowlers

DOWN
1 Inquire
2 Inspector of financial records
3 Crustacean
4 De Valera of Ireland
5 Udd's a "tik
6 Hawaiian seaport
7 First place
8 Harvests
9 Tire type
10 Quorum
11 Inca land
12 Addict
13 Protocols
14 Dot of land
22 Mild cigar
28 Bullfighter
29 Certain
30 Nicon and Buchanan
31 Supercilious attitude
32 Self-centered person
33 Fender mishaps
35 "...baked in—"
37 Choir member
40 "My Fair Lady" name
41 Damp
46 Apartment dweller
48 Black widow
51 Albert or Fisher
53 Exotic
54 Bugle sign
55 "...Mummy Island—"
56 City in Arizona
57 Bridge seat
58 Chinese weapon
59 August
63 Majors or Grant
64 Concoct

Sihanouk retracts threat to boycott UNTAC

PHNOM PENH (R) — Cambodian Head of State Prince Norodom Sihanouk has withdrawn his threat to stop working with United Nations forces, removing a major obstacle to the success of the multi-billion dollar peace mission.

Prince Sihanouk, in a statement released in Phnom Penh after his meeting in Peking Friday with U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) chief Yasushi Akashi, also announced he would be a candidate in presidential elections planned for later this year.

The prince said he would host a special meeting of Cambodia's Supreme National Council, which represents the four factions who signed the October 1991 peace pact, at his Peking residence at the end of this month and invite U.N. officials.

In a letter to Mr. Akashi Monday, Prince Sihanouk cited continuing violence against Cambodia's biggest opposition party, the pro-Royalist Funcinpec led by his son Prince Norodom Ranariddh, as the reason for ceasing cooperation with UNTAC and the Phnom Penh government.

Prince Ranariddh later also announced he was withdrawing support from UNTAC. "His Excellency Mr. Akashi told me that UNTAC was doing everything possible to give me satisfaction but that for technical reasons some problems could not be resolved exactly to my wishes and to the demands of the compatriots," a statement from Prince Sihanouk said.

Prince Sihanouk said he would also invite representatives of the five permanent members of the Security Council to the meeting in Peking, to be convened on Jan. 28.

"This meeting is necessary because important problems remain to be solved in Cambodia before the elections," Prince Sihanouk says he is in Peking for health reasons.

The U.N.'s biggest-ever peacekeeping operation, involving some 22,000 soldiers and civilians, is designed to culminate in elections in May for a new government.

But the peace plan is threatened by the refusal of the Khmer Rouge guerrilla faction to disarm its men or let U.N. vote registration teams into areas it controls.



Police disperse rioters and clear burning objects as ruthlessly to communal violence in the western Indian port city of Bombay (AFP photo)

Bombay smoulders as 157 die in western India riots

BOMBAY (R) — Armed rioters fought running battles with police in Bombay Sunday as security forces struggled to quell spiralling Hindu-Muslim violence in which 157 have died in western India in five days of bloody clashes.

Scores of fires raged across Bombay, India's business capital, as rival gangs took advantage of the communal flare-up to loot smouldering shops, residents said.

In the Kalachowky district of central Bombay, Muslim rioters ignored a daytime curfew and shoot-on-sight orders to the army, fighting running street battles with police with guns, stones and bottles, witnesses said.

On the railway line near Parel station, two corpses lay on the tracks, while in the slum area of Mahim dazed residents sat outside the charred remains of their huts where three people were reported burnt to death during the night.

It took the death toll in five days of mounting Hindu-Muslim clashes in Bombay to 154. At least 43 people have also died in renewed violence in Ahmadabad, 450 kilometres to the north.

Thirteen areas of Bombay and 14 in Ahmadabad have been placed under curfew. But this has not stemmed the wave of stabbings and arson that are part of a dramatic flare-up of communal hatred linked to the destruction of an ancient mosque in northern India.

Although extra troops have been rushed to Bombay, a city of 12 million known in the past as a communal melting pot, this has failed to quell the unrest, apparently because troops have been limited to staging shows of force and have not tried to inter-

vene in the riots with weapons.

Bombay has been tense since last month's nationwide riots triggered by the razing of the mosque in Ayodhya by Hindu zealots in which more than 1,100 people died, including 202 in Bombay.

But the new flare-up appeared to have been deliberately fanned by Hindu political groups trying to push Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao into an early general election, political sources said.

Political leaders called for the army to be given a free hand to suppress the violence. "The time has come for the army to be given full control," said the veteran local leader of the Janata Dal Party, Mrinal Gore.

Hospitals were crammed with casualties, including burnt victims and scores of people stabbed or shot.

Twenty-one year-old Santosh Zagde said he was standing near his house when a mob waving flaming torches began advancing towards him.

"We began pelting stones at them to get them to turn back when suddenly they opened fire on us," he said.

The bloodshed spread to new parts of Bombay at the weekend as rioters burnt shops and cars, and fought gunbattles with police.

At least 39 people were killed on Saturday as shops, warehouses, a cinema and homes were set ablaze, and rioters pelted fire engines with stones and petrol bombs in an attempt to stop them putting out scores of fires.

A senior police officer said police were handicapped by an acute shortage of weapons, with most of them only equipped with bamboo canes. Police have come

under fire and been attacked with homemade bombs.

Police commandos Saturday shot dead seven Muslim militants in a battle with automatic weapons across the rooftops of apartment buildings in downtown Bombay, witnesses said.

At least 39 people were killed on Saturday as shops, warehouses, homes and a cinema were set ablaze, and rioters pelted fire engines with stones and petrol bombs in an attempt to stop them putting out fires.

"We're not getting any protection from the police," complained an officer at the fire control centre.

In the slum area of Jogeshwari, where firemen reported at least eight people were burnt to death Friday, rioters rolled blazing tyres in front of police patrols, residents said. Angry mobs besieged a police station demanding the release of those arrested in the riots.

The 16th century building in the town of Ayodhya became the focus of a political battle between secularists and Hindu nationalists, who said it stood on the birthplace of the Hindu God Rama and should be replaced by a temple.

Newspaper reports said that communal tensions in Bombay and other western areas had been deliberately kept alive by Hindu nationalist parties like the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Shiv Sena as part of a political agenda to force an early national election.

Residents said the latest riots had apparently been provoked by a pamphlet campaign and the organisation of large Hindu prayer meetings close to mosques.

Angolan government claims control of UNITA base

LUANDA, Angola (AP) — In the latest of a string of victories, government troops captured the headquarters of rebel leader Jonas Savimbi in a central Angolan city, a report said.

Mr. Savimbi, however, reportedly escaped.

The rout of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), rebels from the city of Huambo Saturday further jeopardised hopes for negotiated peace in the war-torn land, where fighting broke out last year only months after a peace accord ended 16 years of civil war.

Amid a series of stinging defeats in the last week, UNITA has made repeated requests for ceasefires. But the government said it cannot talk unless the rebels stop their "offensives."

Rebel spokesman Jorge Chitendo, speaking by telephone to Portuguese television during the battle for Huambo, reported more than 100 dead. He did not elaborate.

Mr. Chitendo said he was speaking from the city, and that

Mr. Savimbi was beside him.

After the battle ended, however, General Jose Maria told national radio that Mr. Savimbi apparently had escaped the city before fighting broke out.

"When fighting ended, there was not a single member of UNITA left in town," said Gen. Maria, speaking on Angolan national radio.

"We have to assume their leaders managed to leave before the conflict began."

The central highlands city 480 kilometres southeast of the capital of Luanda has been Mr. Savimbi's headquarters since the rebel chief rejected the results of multi-party elections in September and reassembled his military.

Rebels retreated there Friday after suffering a defeat in the nearby city of Kuito, said Gen. Joao de Matos, chief of staff of the Angolan military.

On Saturday, a street-by-street battle for the city broke out after rebels attacked the governor's compound, he said.

Huambo's police commander, identified as Superintendent Sukissa, told Angolan national radio that rebel leaders had asked

for a ceasefire during the fighting. But he said the government would not agree until UNITA forces stopped shelling government forces.

Marcos Samondo, UNITA representative to the United Nations, sent a letter Friday to Secretary-General Boutros Ghali requesting Security Council help to secure a ceasefire.

The letter accused the government of launching a military offensive to destroy UNITA and impose one-party rule on Angola.

The United Nations has had peacekeepers in Angola since the rebels and government signed peace accords in May, 1991, ending 16 years of civil war that killed 350,000 people.

Thousands have died in battles around the country since fighting broke out between government and rebel troops on Oct. 31 after UNITA lost a parliamentary majority to the ruling popular movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

Mr. Savimbi lost the first round of the presidential race to the MPLA's Jose Eduardo dos Santos.

Palace denies Diana report

LONDON (R) — Buckingham Palace sources Sunday angrily denied a newspaper report that Princess Diana wants a divorce from Prince Charles and is willing to concede custody of her two sons.

"This is total rubbish and is beneath contempt. Once again tabloid newspapers are using the royal family to fight a circulation war," one source was quoted as saying by Britain's Press Association news agency.

The Sunday Mirror said Princess Diana, who separated from her husband, last month, made the decision to seek a divorce after months of consideration.

The newspaper, quoting sources "at the heart of the princess' circle," said she did not plan to become queen and was considering a total withdrawal from public life.

The 31-year-old princess married her husband in 1981.

"Diana is pushing as hard as possible to extricate herself from her marriage and the royal family," the Sunday Mirror said, quoting a "senior source."

"A divorce is definite. There is absolutely no question of her remaining married to Charles despite what appeared in the original statement," the source added.

7 found dead in Chicago fast-food restaurant

PALATINE, Illinois (Agencies) — Seven people were found dead Saturday in a fast-food restaurant described as a homey place where no one worried about safety or even locked the back door during work hours.

The victims — one female and six male — were discovered at a Brown's chicken restaurant in this Chicago suburb shortly after 2:30 a.m., said Deputy Police Chief Walt Gasior.

Jeff Shaw, nursing supervisor at Northwest Community Hospital, said police had indicated the victims were all employees who were shot after the restaurant closed.

Cook County medical examiner Robert Stein said bodies were found in more than one place. Another official in the medical examiner's office, George Cantrell, said they were found in a walk-in refrigerator.

Mr. Gasior said the bodies were found in the "back area" of the restaurant. He said he could not confirm the victims were shot.

Mr. Gasior declined to comment about suspects or a motive for the killings.

Relatives and friends of employees gathered around the cordoned-off restaurant through-

out the morning, some in tears, trying to figure out from the cars in the parking lot who had been killed.

Employees Jason Georgi and Celso Morales, both 17, said they never worried about security at Brown's, which stands alone at an intersection about 100 metres from a strip of stores.

Workers usually closed the restaurant at 9 p.m. and left within an hour, after counting money from the cash registers and cleaning up, Mr. Georgi said. Front doors were locked at closing time, but a back door was left unlocked until the last employee left, he said.

"It wasn't like a horrible place to be," Mr. Morales said. "It was sort of homey."

Seven people, most of them teenagers, usually worked each shift, said Mr. Georgi, who had taken Friday night off.

"I'm really glad I wasn't there, but I feel so bad for them, because someone had to take my place, and if someone who took my place, I don't know, I feel real bad," he said.

Mayor Rita Mullins said she was shocked by the crime.

"This touches every family that lives within the community," she said.

Clinton nominees avoid confrontation

WASHINGTON (AP) — When President-elect Bill Clinton sent five of his cabinet nominees to Capitol Hill for confirmation hearings last week, they were well schooled in the art of least resistance.

When you want Senate approval, it is best to see no evil, hear no evil and speak no evil.

In what was expected to be the most confrontational hearing of the week, Senator Trent Lott, (Republican-Mississippi), repeatedly tried to raise the hackles of Commerce Secretary-designate Ron Brown.

Mr. Lott quizzed Mr. Brown, a lawyer-lobbyist and chairman of the Democratic Party, on his representation of foreign clients, including former Haitian dictator "Baby Doc" Duvalier. He even interjected the names of clients that Mr. Brown's law firm — but not Mr. Brown himself — had handled, such as the notorious financial institution, the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI).

But instead of getting angry, Mr. Brown smiled. He said he did

the best he could for his clients, and said he even tried to be a positive influence on the Duvalier government.

"I will never be an unethical person," Mr. Brown said.

Robert Reich, Mr. Clinton's choice for labour secretary, avoided even fewer Democrats' nearly unanimous queries.

Yes, he told Sen. Paul Simon (Democrat-Illinois), he will look into the merits of a demonstration project sort of like the depression-era programmes that put people to work on public projects. But he could not commit, he said.

"That's a good diplomatic answer that won't get you into any trouble," Mr. Simon, replied. Whether the topic was personal finances or gays in the military, Mr. Clinton's nominees avoided any confrontation with the folks who vote on their jobs in the next few weeks.

It's a pattern likely to repeat itself this week, when 10 additional high-level appointees face confirmation questioning, including Secretary of State-designate

Warren Christopher; Treasury Secretary-designate Lloyd Bentsen; and Health and Human Services Secretary-designate Donna Shalala.

It is a playbook crafted by the Republicans, who half a dozen years ago saw President Ronald Reagan's supreme court nominee, Robert Bork, defeated not because of his qualifications but because of his views, which he boldly enunciated in Senate Judiciary Committee hearings.

By the time the Bush administration was in power, Supreme Court nominees played down their personal views. David Souter and Clarence Thomas both declined to lay out their positions on the critical court issue of abortion.

Mr. Thomas went so far as to distance himself from his own writings — and he survived the Anita Hill controversy to win a lifetime seat on the nation's highest court.

Several of Mr. Clinton's nominees were members of Congress during that episode, and they seem to take the lesson especially to heart.

Japan plans amnesty to mark royal wedding

TOKYO (R) — Japan plans to grant an amnesty to certain convicted criminals as part of a tradition to mark the forthcoming wedding of Japan's future emperor and empress, Kyodo News Agency said Sunday.

Kyodo quoted government sources as saying the government would start official preparations as soon as an imperial household conference formally approves the royal engagement between Crown Prince Naruhito and Masako Owada, a Harvard-educated career diplomat, on Jan. 19.

Japan has a tradition of granting pardons to mark important state occasions and events in the imperial household.

Such pardons have been granted 10 times in the past including when Emperor Hirohito died in 1989 and at Emperor Akihito's ascension to the throne in 1990.

The wedding of the future emperor and empress is likely to be held in early June, according

to media reports.

The wedding will be a major state affair, full of pomp and ceremony not seen since the 1959 storybook marriage between Naruhito's parents, Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko.

Ms. Masako will be only the second commander and the first career woman to join the centuries-old Chrysanthemum Throne, a sign that the imperial family is modernising.

The reports said the Imperial Household Agency judged June 3 appropriate because it is an auspicious day in the Japanese calendar.

A private thinktank has reported that the royal wedding would stimulate spending of more than \$26 billion and increase gross national product by nearly one per cent.

The NLI research institute said it would cause a marriage boom, spur private consumption and housing investment and even support stock prices.



Masako Owada

COLUMN

Corpse on tour

MOSCOW (R) — A busload of Russian shoppers refused to break a trip to Poland because one of their number died. They travelled on for several days, leaving his corpse on the back seat, ITAR-TASS news agency said Sunday. The man died from a heart attack as the group was coming up to the Polish border. TASS said, quoting a newspaper report from the western Russian city of Novgorod. But the would-be shoppers were so determined to continue with their potentially lucrative trip that they refused to turn back to burn him. Local authorities refused to let them enter the man in Poland. After several days, the group returned home, TASS said. Shopping tours to neighbouring countries are extremely popular in the former Soviet Union. People flock westwards with everything from vodka to electric kettles to sell them abroad, make a few dollars or bring other goods back to resell at home. "Commercial tourist trips to Poland, where CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) citizens prefer shopping to sightseeing, are so profitable that commercial interests make people forget about shame and decency," TASS quoted the newspaper as saying. The agency did not say when the incident took place.

Dame Edna moves to Fox

SANTA MONICA (AP) — In the battle of the talk shows, Fox Television has acquired a new host, or hostess, Dame Edna Everage. Dame Edna, also known as Australian comedian Barry Humphries, said Friday he was leaving NBC because "I felt like I was surrounded by a lot of lawyers." The comedian, in trademark champagne pink bouffant wig, rhinestone eyewear and smirk, was featured in three specials for NBC interviewing such stars as Cher, Kim Basinger and Burt Reynolds. Dame Edna's one-hour debut show, tentatively scheduled for February, will be followed by weekly half-hour shows. No time slot was announced.

Semper Gallery closes one hall

DRESDEN, Germany (AP) — The Semper Gallery closed one of its halls after damp invaded the building, which was restored at a cost of 100 million marks (\$60 million) to display one of Germany's great collections of old masters' paintings. The reopening of the gallery of Dec. 5 was celebrated as a state occasion, but on Thursday, officials were crestfallen in describing how a combination of cold weather, warm visitors and thin walls apparently let moisture collect in the German hall. Wet spots developed early this week behind paintings by the 16th-century masters Duerer and Cranach, especially those hung in niches in the Hall. "The niches — we forgot them during the planning. I can't talk about it," groaned Wolf Reider, construction department head in the Saxony State government, at a news conference. Gallery Director Harald Marx said, "The goal of the expensive restoration was to rule out exactly this in the future. I ask myself if the construction experts could not have foreseen all this." On the bright side, the damp was affecting only the one hall, and 93 per cent of the Semper collection of some 700 paintings was still on view. The gallery's most famous Madonna, Raphael's "Sistine Madonna," is "safe as in the bosom of Abraham," Marx said.

'No English please, we're French'

PARIS (R) — The film academy which gives the annual Cesar Awards, France's equivalent of Oscars, has ruled that it will no longer consider films produced by French directors in English for its major awards. The controversial decision means that many top 1992 films by French directors or starring French actors — Jean-Jacques Annaud's "The Lover," Ridley Scott's "1492 — Christopher Columbus" co-produced by and starring Gerard Depardieu and Louis Malle's "Damage" — will be classed as foreign films. As such, they are only in contention for the "best foreign film" award. The Academy of Cinema Art and Technology decided, Mr. Annaud, who is vice-president of the Cesar Committee, said he disagreed with this linguistic protectionism, arguing that cinema was primarily a matter of pictures, not words. But the vast majority of his colleagues felt that "films made by French people but not in French are not French."

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

15 killed in Indonesia plane crash

JAKARTA (R) — Fifteen people were killed when a propeller plane carrying 39 passengers and crew crashed near the Indonesian city of Surabaya late Saturday afternoon. "It crashed four minutes after takeoff," a search and rescue official told Reuters by phone from Surabaya Sunday. He said investigations were continuing into why the British-made Hawker Siddeley 748 plane crashed. The plane belongs to Bouraq Airlines whose fleet is largely made up of ageing Hawker Siddeleys and Viscounts. The news agency Antara quoted witnesses as saying the plane had been trying to return to the airport after one of its engines failed. The plane crashed into swampy land about two kilometres away, breaking up and bursting into flames on impact.

Japan lost top-secret code book in 1988

TOKYO (R) — A top-secret code book used by Western military allies to identify friendly and enemy aircraft has been missing since 1988, Japan's Kyodo News Agency reported Sunday. It quoted military analysts and observers as saying that the loss happened before the end of the cold war and could have had serious implications if the Soviet Union had obtained the codes. The agency, quoting military sources, said a Japanese navy vessel lost the code sheet for the Selective Identification Feature (SIF) used to identify transponder signals from friendly planes in June 1988. It said Japanese and U.S. navy officials have confirmed the incident took place but they said it did not damage allied security.

Tornado kills nearly 50 in Bangladesh

DHAKA (R) — Nearly 50 people were killed and thousands made homeless when a tornado battered villages in northeast Bangladesh, officials said Sunday. They said the tornado — which lasted just five minutes — struck early Saturday, a day after another tornado further north killed at least 26 people. Witnesses and rescue workers said hundreds of houses were flattened or blown away by 190-kilometre-per-hour winds. Electricity supplies were cut off, roads were blocked by fallen trees and hundreds of head of cattle were killed. "It was havoc. No-one seemed to realise immediately exactly what had happened," said a journalist in the northeastern tea-growing district of Sylhet. Others said nearly 500 people were treated in hospital for injuries caused by flying debris.

Muslim cleric accused of Tajik conspiracy

MOSCOW (R) — Tajik authorities have launched criminal proceedings against the country's senior Muslim cleric and two prominent politicians for alleged conspiracy to seize power, ITAR-TASS news agency said Saturday. It said a special team from the prosecutor's office, Interior Ministry and security service in the Central Asian republic had been set up to investigate the case against the three men. TASS named them as Qazi Akbar Turazhondade, spiritual head of Tajikistan's Muslims, Democratic Party leader Shodmon Yusuf and Former Deputy Prime Minister Davlat Usmon, the vice-chairman of the Islamic Revival Party. It said they were accused of "entering a criminal conspiracy last May with the aim of seizing power and overthrowing the legally-elected leadership" of the former Soviet republic. The charge appeared to refer to mass demonstrations organised by the radical Muslim and democratic opposition last May against

then-President Rakhmon Nabiyev, a former communist. The opposition succeeded in toppling Mr. Nabiyev in September, but pro-communists wrested back power two months later and now control both parliament and the government.

Breakthrough gives hope to older mothers

LONDON (R) — A British medical breakthrough could lead to thousands of infertile women and those past childbearing age being able to have babies, the Sunday Express reported. Doctors at Edinburgh Medical School have pioneered a technique that could see ovaries transplanted from human foetuses into infertile women, the newspaper said. Women would be given drugs to overcome rejection of the transplanted tissues and cells which would grow into new ovaries. The Sunday Express said that could be one of the best ways to reverse a woman's menopause. It said that under the treatment, foetuses would be the genetic "mothers" of the babies born to these women. Dr. Roger Gosden, head of the Edinburgh team, told the newspaper: "There are obvious ethical and legal problems. It would be a precedent to have a dead foetus as the genetic mother of a child, because this is the outcome if a patient who received foetal egg cells became pregnant with them."

Repatriation of stranded Pakistanis begins

DHAKA (R) — A group of 321 Bihari Muslims left Dhaka for Pakistan Sunday, starting the repatriation of 238,000 Pakistanis stranded in Bangladesh for 21 years. Members of 63 Bihari families were brought to Dhaka airport from a refugee camp on the outskirts of the city and put on an aircraft for Lahore. Bangladesh officials, Pakistani Ambassador Anwar Kamal and representatives of the Saudi-based Charity Rabita Al Alam Al Islami — which has arranged funds for the repatriation — saw off the Biharis at the airport, witnesses said. The Muslim refugees migrated to former East Pakistan from India's Bihar state after the British-ruled subcontinent was partitioned in 1947. They opposed the emergence of independent Bangladesh following its independence war against Pakistan. About 380,000 of the Urdu-speaking Biharis were left in Bengali-speaking Bangladesh when Pakistani troops surrendered on Dec. 16, 1971. Nearly 127,000 Biharis were resettled in Pakistan under a 1974 agreement. The rest have since been living in 66 squalid camps in Dhaka and elsewhere in Bangladesh.

S. Korea fights against counterfeiting

SEOUL (R) — South Korea, often criticised by foreign manufacturers of designer goods for being soft on piracy, has launched a major crackdown on counterfeiters, the domestic Yonhap news agency said Sunday. It said the prosecutor general's office issued an order on Saturday for a nationwide crackdown on manufacturers of fake goods. A prosecution source was quoted by Yonhap as saying the clampdown would focus on piracy of foreign trademarks such as those of bags and clothes, as well as illegal reproduction of computer software, video tapes and publications. South Korea, which has legitimate licences to produce goods for many overseas brand names such as Reebok and Nike, also has a thriving counterfeiting industry. In Seoul's Itaewon district, tourists and Koreans can buy fake Rolex watches for just \$20 as well as cheap T-shirts and sportswear boasting expensive designer labels.